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Anacosta, D. C., May S, 1892.
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ments.

The GAZETTE office is connected with the Telephone Exchange. Advertisements, orders for the paper, news or any information or business can be sent by telephone.
[Entered at the Postoffice Alexandria, Virginia, as second-class matter.]

The Hanging Terror of Ice. The disaster by which the Savoyard

village of St. Gervais-les-Bains, on the direct road from Geneva to Chamouni and Mt. Blane, and the smaller villages of Favet and Bionnay, in the valley of the River Arve, have suffered so terribly, turns out to be one of the most rebly, turns out to be one of the most remarkable in that long series of avalanches that make the human history of the Alps so thrilling and painful. It seems, by the careful and scientific study which Professor F. A. Forel, of Morges, has made, that a high glacier on the Tetes-Rousses, so called, at an attitude of more than 10,000 feet, let all a glacier leads of the professor of the Tetes-Rousses of more than 25,000. fall a glacial mass of more than 35,000,-000 cubic feet down a height of at least 3,000 feet; that this enormous mass of ice and rock disengaged so much heat by its fall as to melt as well as pulyerize the glacier-fragment, which further melted by contact with the warm surfaces and substances it encountered on its way, and was thus converted into viscous mud, and in that form rushed suddenly down on the unlucky villages. The result was shocking. Professor Forel thus describes it:

ing. Professor Forel thus describes it:
The molten mass was fluid enough
to slip down a slope of 10 feet in a 100;
it was dense enough to overthrow everything in its passage. I estimate that it spent about half an hour, perhaps a little more, in reaching the Arve from the point of its fall. In a few min-utes everything had gone by and there remained only a coating of mud, cov-ering all the ruins with its infected and viscous slime. In this enormous fall from so great a height, extending horizontally more than eight miles, I find the most gigantic example I know of a glacial avalanche. Avalanches of 7,000 feet fall, extending four and a half miles, have been known, but all others are of much smaller dimensions. The condition of the muddy channel in which the substance ran, shows that it was a viscous and not a fluid mass; for alongside of heaps of mud, which I saw drying slowly, flowers were to be seen only from two to four inches off, and ears of wheat that had not been wet nor soiled by the mud. Again, in the houses flooded but not destroyed—in a house at Bionnay, for instance, used for a school, the floor was covered with mud, but a few inches higher up the scholars' desks were not soiled by dirty water, the walls were dry, &c. Now, dirty water, in order to deposit a layer of mud 12 inches thick, must have been 6 or 8 feet deep; but here the sheet of water did not much rise above the mud, as I saw it three days

after it had been deposited."
What adds to the singularity of this disaster is that no such avalauche has been known to occur in that region, nor was this huge and distant glacier at all dreaded by those who lived near it. Professor Forel says: "Neither at St. Gervais nor at Biennay did anyone know of any such calamity before; but it is likely that this glacier did detach a few avalanches each year, only, being small, they did not reach the vil-

In the three villages more than 150 persons seem to have been destroyed. The houses that remain are mostly uninhabitable. Where the soil has not been swept away the crops are choked up with a thick layer of mud. The small animals have perished. "Happy are the families," says one writer, "that have been annihilated with all that they possess." The question is now raised whether the disaster could not have been prevented. Professor Forel

says:
"We know that the glaciers of the Mt. Blane group are at present all in-creasing and I find in this event a mournful illustration of a report addressed by me last spring to the gov ernment of the Canton Valais, in which I set forth that all the catastrophes of the high Alps are due to an advance of some glacier. I also called upon the authorities of that canton to have their glaciers inspected, since all of them were beginning to grow and move forward. The Cantonal Council attended to the request, and gave the matter in charge of the inspector of forests. I of mill work and that connected with brick-work promptly executed. Repairing prompt-ly done. J. & H. AITCHESON, would it have been possible for an intelligent supervision to have given no-tice to those in danger? In the present Machinist, Iron and Brass Founder, shipsmith and Blacksmith, case I think not. Under other conditions it would be possible. But here no one, as I think, could have suspected a

danger so remote and yet so awful." It seems that the particular glacier responsible for this accident is not that SOUTH UNION STREET, ALEXANDRIA, Will furnish and repair all kinds of Machinery. Iron and Brass Castings, Wrought and Cast Iron Fences, Mill Work, Szby and Blacksmithing. Edge Tools, Mill Pieks, Facing Hammers, and all kinds of Mill Work made and refirst in the vale of Chamouni, not far first in the vale of Chamouni, not far from which, but still higher up, under the rocky peakes of the Tetes-Rousses, in the best region for the chamois hunter, was this hanging terror, known chiefly to these hunters, which suddenly slipped from its perch, slid down a declivity of 70 feet in the hundred, pass-ed to the right of the glacier of Bionnay, and then, following a ravine of the mountain torrents, fell upon the ill-fated villages which became its prey. Few could have guessed that such would have been its course, even had they known its situation or its condition. It should be added that the villages destroyed, although in French territory,

are but a few miles from the border of

the Swiss canton of Valais, which lies on the headwaters of the Rhone and the slopes of the Mt. Blane range,

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